



*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 11-15-05*****

From the Office of the Director of Health

Nutrition Needs Met Through WIC Assistance Program

More than 5,800 Greene County residents will receive nutrition assistance each month this year through the Springfield-Greene County Health Department's Women, Infant and Children (WIC) nutrition program. A contract signed with the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will allow the health department to provide 69,960 participant visits through fiscal year 2006.

WIC is a special supplemental nutrition program with a strong emphasis on education about nutrition-based health. The program provides nutrition education, nutritional screening, dietary risk assessment and counseling to pregnant women, new mothers, infants and children up to five years old. WIC also provides checks to purchase nutritious supplemental foods such as milk, eggs, cheese, juice, cereal, peanut butter, and/or dry beans or peas at several local businesses. New mothers who are breastfeeding may receive an enhanced food package.

In 2006 the Springfield-Greene County WIC agency plans to participate in the WIC Farmers' Market Program, which will provide WIC families additional checks during the summer growing months to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets.

The Springfield-Greene County WIC program provided 70,372 individual visits during the 2005 contract year. WIC Coordinator Tana Lovan says, "Our program strives to provide up-to-date, relevant nutrition education, which will empower families to improve their nutritional status, thus improving their health."

The WIC program is open to families who live in Missouri, with a gross income that meets or is below the income guidelines. Program benefits are provided to women who are pregnant, breastfeeding or whose pregnancy recently ended, infants less than 12 months and children under 5 years old who have a need for improved nutrition as determined by a nutrition professional. The unborn child is counted as a member of the family when eligibility is determined. For complete income eligibility information, visit our website at <http://health.springfieldmogov.org>.

(more)

To learn more about WIC or to make an appointment, visit the WIC office at 290 E. Central or call (417) 864-1079. Office hours are Monday through Thursday 7:30am to 7:00pm and Friday 7:30am to 5:00pm.

The Springfield-Greene County WIC program is an equal opportunity affirmative action employer. Services are provided on a non-discriminatory basis. Standards for participation in the WIC program are the same for everyone, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap. If you desire information in an alternate form because of a disability, contact the Springfield-Greene County WIC Program, 290 E. Central, Springfield, MO 65802, or call (417) 864-1079. Hearing-impaired citizens may contact the department through Missouri Relay at 1-800-735-2966.

Media contact:

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